
Early Learning & Human Services Committee

HB 1999

Brief Description: Coordinating services and programs for foster youth in order to improve educational outcomes.

Sponsors: Representatives Carlyle, Kagi, Lytton, Walsh, Sawyer, Pettigrew, Ortiz-Self, Dent, Parker, Caldier, Goodman and Jinkins.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Moves responsibility for the educational coordination program for foster youth and demonstration site to improve educational outcomes for foster youth from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.
- Moves responsibility for the Supplemental Educational Transition Program for foster youth from the DSHS to the Washington Student Achievement Council.

Hearing Date: 2/17/15

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Education Coordination Program for Dependent Youth.

In 2012 the Legislature enacted Substitute House Bill 2254, which requires the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to contract with at least one nongovernmental entity that has demonstrated success in working with foster care youth in improving educational outcomes. The nongovernmental entity must:

- administer a program of educational coordination for foster youth in Washington from birth through twelfth grade;
- engage in a public-private partnership with the DSHS;
- raise a portion of the funds needed for service delivery, administration, and evaluation;

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- provide services to support individual youth upon a referral by a social worker with the DSHS or nongovernmental agency;
- be collocated in the offices of the DSHS to provide timely consultation and in-service training; and
- report outcomes to the DSHS twice per year.

Demonstration Site to Improve Educational Outcomes for Dependent Youth.

The 2013-15 Operating Budget provided funding for the Children's Administration to contract with a nongovernmental entity to improve educational outcomes of dependent students by providing individualized education services and monitoring and supporting the completion of educational milestones, remediation needs, and special education needs of these students. This contract is performance-based with a stated goal of improving the graduation rates of foster youth by 2 percent per year over five school years.

The services required by the demonstration site include:

- direct advocacy for foster youth to eliminate barriers to educational access and success;
- consultation with the DSHS case workers to develop educational plans for and with participating youth;
- monitoring educational progress of participating youth;
- providing participating youth with school and local resources that may assist in educational access and success; and
- coaching youth, caregivers, and social workers to advocate for dependent youth in the educational system.

Passport to College Program.

The Passport to College Promise Scholarship program (Passport program) was established in 2007 to help dependent students attend and succeed in college. The three primary components of this program are administered by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) and include:

- a student scholarship;
- campus incentive funding to provide recruitment and retention services; and
- a partnership with the College Success Foundation to provide support to students and training.

In the 2012-13 academic year, 404 students were served through the Passport program.

Supplemental Education Transition Program.

The Supplemental Education Transition Program is part of the Passport program that is managed by the DSHS, and requires the DSHS to contract with at least one nongovernmental entity to develop, implement, and administer a program of supplemental educational transition planning for youth beginning at age 14 in foster care. The supplemental transition planning must include:

- comprehensive information regarding postsecondary educational opportunities;
- how and when to apply to postsecondary educational programs;
- what precollege tests a foster youth should take based on his or her postsecondary plans;
- what courses a foster youth should take based on his or her postsecondary plans;
- issues that impact college students and their success rates; and
- which web sites, nongovernmental entities, public agencies, and other foster youth support providers specialize in which services.

Summary of Bill:

Program of Education Coordination for Dependent Youth.

The agency responsible for contracting with a nongovernmental agency to administer a program of education coordination for dependent youth is changed from the DSHS to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). A requirement is added to this contract, requiring that the contract be outcome-driven with a stated goal of reducing educational barriers to youth success.

Demonstration Sites to Improve Educational Outcomes for Dependent Youth.

The current demonstration program to improve educational outcomes for foster youth is maintained and expanded to include a second site. The agency contracting with the nongovernmental agency for this purpose is changed from the DSHS to the OSPI and the resulting contract must be outcome-driven.

The nongovernmental agency must engage in a public-private partnership with the OSPI and is responsible for raising a portion of the funds needed for service delivery, administration and evaluation.

The youth eligible for referral are expanded to include youth ages 13-21.

Supplemental Education Transitional Planning Program.

The Supplemental Education Transitional Planning (SETuP) program is moved from the DSHS to the WSAC. The youth served by this program are ages 13-21 and are not served by the demonstration sites described above. The contract for this service must be outcome-driven with a stated goal of improving the graduation rates and postsecondary plan initiation of eligible youth by 2 percent per year over five school years starting with the 2015-16 school year.

The SETuP program shall include:

- consultation with schools and the DSHS social workers to develop educational plans for and with participating youth;
- age-specific developmental and logistical tasks to be accomplished for high school and postsecondary success;
- facilitating youth participation with appropriate school and local resources that may assist in educational access and success; and
- coordinating with youth, caregivers, schools, and social workers to support youth progress in the educational system.

The SETuP program may be collocated in the DSHS and the nongovernmental entity must report outcomes to the WSAC and the DSHS twice per year.

Memoranda of Understanding.

The DSHS, the WSAC, and the OSPI shall enter into, or revise existing memoranda of understanding that:

- facilitate student referral, data and information exchange, agency roles and responsibilities, and cooperation and collaboration among state agencies and nongovernmental agencies; or

- effectuate transfer of responsibilities from the DSHS to the OSPI for the program of education coordination and demonstration sites described above, and from the DSHS to the WSAC for the SETuP program.

By November 1, 2016, and twice a year thereafter, the DSHS, the WSAC, and the OSPI shall submit a report to the governor and appropriate committees of the Legislature regarding these programs and educational outcomes of foster youth.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.